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ROOT CAUSE OF TERRORISM:
A BRIEF SURVEY OF SOUTH ASIA

Saroj Kumar RATH[1]

Abstract

South Asian countries, the home to one fifth of the world humanity, are overpopulated, poverty stricken, underdeveloped and poorly governed. Except the two island nations, Sri Lanka and Maldives, rest of the South Asian countries viz. India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Iran have messy borders and a messier history of conflict. People in this region are an incendiary mix of strong ethnic identities and diverse religious communities, many of which are concentrated within exclusionary ghettoes making the region a potential breeding ground of terrorism. Religious sanction, state support and supportive societal infrastructure to terrorism along with hateful ideologies have made the region the victim as well as the accused of terrorism. Three factors are primarily responsible for the root causes of terrorism – a) support from the state, b) supportive societal infrastructure, and c) management of terrorist organization.

Keywords: Terrorism; Root Cause; South Asia; State Support.

Introduction

Modern terrorism, it is said, originated in the bleak ghettos of Beirut and Belfast. Since then, the phenomenon has come a long way (George. 2003. pp-57). South Asian countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran are mostly ruled either by dictators or by kings. Other countries like India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are under democratic dispensation but deeply rooted in clannish politics. Rulers of South Asian countries always keen to safeguard their position and hence, at times, supported extremism. The support of the rulers, which is called state support, to extremist group is one of the most important factors of the root causes of terrorism. A large number of populations in the region live in abject poverty. Poor people are considered as a vital part of supportive infrastructure for the root cause of terrorism. Creating, organizing and managing an extremist organization required an elaborate support system. Leaders of terrorist organizations develop nexus with the government and offer their services to settle political score and hence they

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become an indispensable part of the ruling cliché. This unlawful nexus, if continue unchecked for long, become another important reason of the root cause of terrorism.

The main concern, which need painful soul searching is - why so many terrorist organizations have been established and flourished in South Asian countries and finally have become so powerful as to usurp governmental organizations? And what would be the future prospect and danger? Afghanistan, for long, has been housing the most dreaded terror creed of the world, the al Qaeda and its affiliates. The country is now ravaged by war against terrorism. However, amongst the South Asian countries, Pakistan is considered as the major exporter of terrorism. The world has largely recognized the fact that Pakistan never distinguish to 'to promote the export of terror, whether to India or whether to Afghanistan or anywhere else in the world'(Watt. 2010, July 20. *The Guardian*). President Barrack Obama admitted the fact that 'Afghanistan and Pakistan are the epicenter of violent extremism practiced by al Qaeda. It is from here that the US was attacked on 9/11, and it is from here that new attacks are being plotted (Obama. 2009. *White House*)'. The US president is further quoted as saying at an Oval Office meeting on November 25, 2009 that 'We need to make clear to people that the cancer is in Pakistan'(Rajghatta. 2010, September 23. *Times of India*).

Terrorism in many countries of South Asia is directly or indirectly linked with Pakistan. India is suffering from home grown Islamic terrorism and from the Maoist extremism. However, most of the terror attacks on India are originating from Pakistan based terrorist organizations or Indian groups having Pakistani connection. Terrorism in Sri Lanka is like epidemic. Sri Lanka – a country ravaged by terrorism, racial tension and bad governance (Hattotuwa, 2003: 9) has recently witnessed a little improvement in the situation. Intelligence report confirmed that there are many good and substantiated reports of the Sri Lankan terrorist group Liberation Tamil of Tiger Elam (LTTE) and Pakistani terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) exchanging terrorist expertise. The LeT is supplying arms to the LTTE, and both carrying out joint training (Ministry of Defence, 2010, Government of Sri Lanka). Bangladesh houses a good number of terrorist organizations, who are working in tandem with the Pakistani terrorist organizations. The emergence of groups like *Harakat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami-Bangladesh, Jamatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh, Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh* and *Ahl-e-Hadith Andolon Bangladesh -* which occurred after the return of Bangladeshi mujahedeen from the Afghan wars—infused political violence in Bangladesh with the language of *jihad* and tactics borrowed from terrorist groups abroad (Pakistan) (Fink, 2010).

The documentary evidence, intelligence sources and political opinion agrees to the consensus opinion that Pakistan is the root of most of the South Asian terrorism. Almost all terrorist organizations in South Asia, ranging from Afghanistan to Sri Lanka bear a Pakistan footprint. It is very much necessary to understand the reason how Pakistani government, military and its powerful spy agency the Inter Services Intelligence Directorate are involved in the formation of terrorist organizations, their activities and their future. Academic research, media reporting and government sources mainly focused on 'Indian obsession, Kashmir dispute, territorial disputes with Afghanistan and religion as the root causes of terrorism in Pakistan'. The search for the root causes of terrorism in South Asia always ends

up in either or all of these factors. Over the time Pakistani army, political leadership and religious leaders portrayed these factors as the real reason of terrorism and conflict. The involved stakeholders successfully concealed the inherent and prolonged power struggles and vested interest of individual. But ostensibly the reasons put forward by those players are not probably the real reasons. Power struggles amongst various stake holders seems hidden in their attitude. What is presently available in the academia is mostly sociological analysis of the reason of root causes of terrorism. The political or governmental reasons are less debated. It is important to deal with the policy making of governments or world, because wittingly or unwittingly the policies persuaded by states are, responsible for the rise and growth of terrorism. Terrorist does not belong to a homogenous background. Many terrorists come from well-off background. There are also a good number of terrorist who come from poor origin. Eradication of poverty may certainly reduce conflicts including terrorism, but what is more important is to take existence of terrorists, their organizations, or networks as facts, and consider how each government of the world should deal with them for the purpose of it's prevention, reduction and annihilation because governmental policy toward them plays a big role. The study is an earnest effort to analyze the root causes of one of the most vital problems of contemporary world – terrorism. The study focuses on the South Asian context, especially in the region of Pakistan with a cursory look into India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the other hotbeds of terrorism.

Searching the Root Cause

The root cause of terrorism is one of the fiercely debated and disagreed subjects in the academia and in the political circle. It is very important to understand the motive and purpose of terrorists, who carried out those attacks (figure behind), the historical background and future prospects etc before dealing with the 'root cause'. It is contended that the identification of the root cause of terrorism may lead to the subsequent reduction, if not elimination, of terror acts. The outcome of the search for the reason and motive of terrorist attacks may differ from time to time and from event to event. Scholars cited religion, poverty, illiteracy, foreign occupation of Muslim land and implacable hatred of the zealot followers of Islam for other religionists (*Kafir*) as the reasons of root causes of terrorism. Undeniably the marginalization suffered by the population of many Islamic countries and the consequent difficulties in fitting in the mainstream of the society, constitute contributory causes — of a socio-economic nature — of their drift into terrorism. However, the task of uncovering terrorism's root causes is complicated because certain types of causes, such as poverty or modernization, produce all kinds of social outcomes, of which terrorism is just one (Bjorgo, 2005: 2).

British PM Tony Blair emphasised that 'Terrorism's teeth are planted in the fertile soil of wrongs un-righted, of disputes left to fester for years or even decades, of failed states, of poverty and deprivation (Blair. 2001). Secretary of State Colin Powell said that 'the root cause of terrorism does come from situations where there is poverty, where there is ignorance, where people see no hope in their lives

(Powell. 2002).' A US Senate Resolution declared that "The education of children around the world addresses several of the root causes of international terrorism. The distribution of food in schools increases the attendance of children who might otherwise be susceptible to recruitment by groups that offer them food in return for their attendance at extremist schools or participation in terrorist training camps" (Congressional Record, 2004: 11533). Consequentially, the US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism cites winning the 'War on Poverty' as a means to diminish support for terrorist organizations and recruitment (Khan & Afshan, 2008: 65-86). Kim Dae-Jung, the 2000 Nobel Peace Prize recipient and President of South Korea said that, "At the bottom of terrorism is poverty. That is the main cause. Then there are other religious, national, and ideological differences" (Jai, 2001). These apprehensions may be partially true but for a mass recruitment and the functioning of a large number of terrorist organizations with absolute immunity, as in the case of Pakistan, poverty is not entirely responsible.

However, convenient 'root causes' like poverty, illiteracy, backwardness, fundamentalism, authoritarianism are hardly the considerations in sustaining terrorism or in winning recruits (Parashar, 2005). Claude Berrebi in a Rand Corporation study on the root causes of terrorism concluded that "If there is a link between income level, education, and participation in terrorist activities, it is either very weak or in the opposite direction of what one intuitively might have expected". Berrebi found that "there is no reason to believe that increasing the years of schooling or raising the income level of individuals, without simultaneously modifying the educational content and monitoring (or at least limiting) the possible use of any additional income, will decrease the trend towards terror, the level of terror, or using means of terror'. The study discount illiteracy as the reason of terrorism when it said, 'The importance of the use of education to fight terror is not invalidated, in spite of these disappointing findings, which suggest that increasing years of school enrolment and attainment of higher degrees by itself does not reduce the probability of participation in terrorist activities, and possibly increases participation" (Barrebi, 2007: 42).

Careful scrutiny of the last decade's terrorist activities originating from or occurred in South Asia reveals the fact that the above cited reasons are not behind many of the major terror attacks. None of the 9/11 attackers or 7/7 bombers were poor or illiterate. Some of them were not even religious either. Still they become fidayeen terrorists. The root of those attacks lies in the existence of supportive societal infrastructure and partial state (Taliban/Pakistan) patronage. The Mumbai attackers were patronized by Pakistan, supported by a superbly managed terrorist organization and facilitated by the society (Rath. 2010. pp-362. Terrorism is largely about the eternal struggle for power. Groups and individuals engaged in this power struggle use terrorism to suit their ends. In some cases terrorism is legitimized by its perpetrators if the state uses it as an instrument of its policy. The outcome of the search for the root cause of terrorism may be different each time for each terror incident. Vast literatures existed on the subject of the reason, precise motive, and spread of terrorist activities in South Asia. However, analysis of this paper finds a complex presence of three factors as the root causes of modern terrorism in South Asia. The three causes are a) supportive societal infrastructure, b) support from the state, and c) management of terrorist organization.

Supportive Societal Infrastructure

Supportive societal structure is the most vital and primary cause of terrorism. The definition of a supportive social infrastructure is still to be developed. However, this paper endeavours to define supportive societal infrastructure as 'where society facilitates the presence of extremist ideology (religious or otherwise), its promoters and its recruits; where violence is not guilt; and where society is suppressed enough to accept extremism as a way of survival'. Ungoverned, ill-governed or under-governed territories, a typical feature in South Asia, breed an environment of existential insecurity. Powerful groups or individuals with militant thought force the society to accept their dictate. The citizen of such a society faces these powerful groups or individuals every day and automatically privy to their way of thinking. In the absence of any protective measure common man either agree or support or join them. Religious sanction offer societal sanctity to their forced choice. Often the outcome is a supportive societal structure for terrorism. (Emphasize Mine). Some of the South Asian countries especially Afghanistan, Pakistan and to some extent Sri Lanka are nearly fitting into this definition. Democracy never took root in Pakistan. The country is badly governed by successive political leadership while military ruled most part of its history on the barrel of gun. A helpless society and a weak and an invisible government in Pakistan have facilitated extremist organization to take deep root in the country. Pakistani society provides everything a terrorist organization needed like – support for extremist ideology, placing religious concern before self, uninterrupted supply of young and committed fighters, justification of terror as the way to achieve Islamic goal and acceptance of death of their nearer and dearer as martyr.

Many popular ideas about terrorists and why they seek to harm us are fuelled by falsehoods and misinformation. Leading politicians and scholars have argued that poverty and lack of education breed terrorism, despite the wealth of evidence showing that most terrorists come from middle-class, and often college-educated, backgrounds. Terrorists are not people who have nothing to live for. On the contrary, they are people who believe in something so strongly that they are willing to die for it. Individuals, either in small groups or on their own, supply their services to terrorist organization. Terrorist organization recruit, train and deploy terrorists (Kruger, 2007: 48-49).

Other South Asian societies have their own peculiar character to define the supportive societal infrastructure in their countries. Contrary to Pakistan, Indian society is largely democratic and non-violent. Extremism, although present in certain section of the society, is largely condemned and discouraged. Islamic extremism in India receives patronage from beyond the border and Maoist extremism is confined in the impregnable territory of Indian jungles. In the absence of a representative government, Afghanistan is ruled by warlords and more prone to terrorist activities. There has been a death of all institutions in the country. Society in Afghanistan is under heavy suppression. Sri Lankan society never hesitated to support extremism. Ethnic rivalries aided their societal motive to support terrorism. Bangladesh on the other hand is the quintessential neighbour whose society is vulnerable to terrorism.

Modern democracy in South Asia has produced a powerful class, who rule the region for most part of its history. The ruling class is mainly comprises of political families and their clan, bureaucracy and its material beneficiaries, security forces and industry houses. Combinedly these elite classes of the society run South Asian nations in the name of democracy. The elite are often detached from the society. The ruling class which forms a minuscule part of nations takes all the benefit of the state when a large section of the population left high and dry. Often clash amongst the ruling classes, which is not concerned about the bread and butter issues, make the matter worse. Often, the acts of omission and commission of the ruling elite, act as the supportive societal infrastructure. The large section of deprived people, whose lives carry little value, wittingly or unwittingly becomes the part of the supportive societal infrastructure. They are vulnerable to subversive activities and there is always the danger that they may join the terror forces. The disillusionment of common men and state's apathy towards them prepare the ground for a supportive societal infrastructure. The absence of a responsive government or the inability of a government allows religious organization to take deep root in the society and interfere in the administration of the people. The weakening of national government and the strengthening of church and clergy produce an atmosphere conducive for a supportive societal infrastructure for terrorism. Taking advantage of such a situation terrorist organizations spread their tentacles and solicits support of ordinary citizen for their extremist agenda.

The easy availability of young and impressionable people in the society aided to the effort of terrorist organizations. Availability of such vulnerable groups of people in Pakistan makes the recruiter's job easy. The capture of a fidayeen terrorist Ajmal Kasab of LeT during the Mumbai attacks of 2008 and his subsequent confession shed important light on the root cause of terrorism. During interrogation Kasab has revealed that "he was attracted to LeT because of his father's persuasion, prevailing poverty in the family and the prospect of prosperity after joining a terror organization" (Kasab, 2008). In this case, the society is open to terror acts for the material prosperity of the family. Added to this, the society does not consider terror as an act of crime.

Religious sanctity for jihad, as often pronounced by leading Islamic scholars, forms another major part of supportive societal infrastructure. Religion plays an important role during the recruitment of urbane and sophisticated terrorist. Many self proclaimed exponents of Islam articulated jihad in a way that suits the flourishing of terrorism in South Asia. In the mid-1920s, one of the greatest ideologues of jihad, Abdul A' La Maududi (Founder and head of the Jamaat-e-Ulema-Islami in India and, following Partition, in Pakistan) explained that 'jihad' has been accorded the dignity of "the best of all prayers" in Islam. Maududi's literal pronouncement of jihad as "in the way of god" and his call that "Islam requires the earth—not just a portion, but the whole planet through the use of jihad" (Maududi, 2006: 5-8), instilled stealth in the mind of both the recruiter and the recruit. In 1920s, Hassan al-Banna articulated a strikingly similar ideology in Egypt. Al-Banna's vision was subsequently extended by his more extreme successor, Sayyid Qutb, who viewed jihad as the essential but 'forgotten duty' of all

Muslims (Shahni, 2005). "The Taliban's anomalous interpretation of Islam emerged from an extreme and perverse interpretation of Deobandism, preached by Pakistani mullahs (clerics) in Afghan refugee camps" (Rashid, 1999). Terror groups like the al Qaeda, LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammad espoused their own interpretation of jihad, where they justified suicide attacks as part of jihad. Neither society nor religious discourse in their country of origin rejected the interpretation. Ideology espoused by the Muslim scholars and terror groups dominated society in Muslim dominated countries, which was helpful to prepare a supportive societal infrastructure.

Support from the State

A consensus definition on the state sponsored terrorism is still to be evolved. Since the involvement of state in terrorism activities is difficult to prove, considering the easy deniability of each of the acts and the involvement of actors by the involved state, support from the state in the form of allowing terror groups to function, offering training through ex-servicemen and guiding attacks is continuing unabated. A 2008 Brooking Institution analysis paper said, 'state sponsorship can be broken up into several categories and sub-categories, ranging from direct control to support through incapacity (Byman, 2008: 16). The paper also distinguishes active from passive sponsorship'. Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "There is no international terrorism without the support of sovereign states". Netanyahu argued "Often (sovereign) regimes provide the terrorists with intelligence, money, and operational assistance, dispatching them to serve as deadly proxies to wage a hidden war against more powerful enemies. Take away all this state support, and the entire scaffolding of international terrorism will collapse into dust" (Netanyahu, 2001: 3-4). Terrorists are not suspended in midair as they get training, arm and finance from state or state sponsored agencies. International terrorism cannot survive without the active or passive support of the state as the might of any state law is mightier than any of the terrorist organization. This paper endeavours to provide a broad parameter which can be defined as support from the state to terrorism. "State connivance with the process of encouraging terrorist group/activities through recruitment, promotion, and finance to achieve strategic purpose; or intra-state power struggle resulted in flourishing of terrorist groups; or allowing powerful section of the society to run extremist organization under the garb of charity" may be termed as support from the state to terrorism. South Asia, with a long history of conflict, is still to come out from the baggage of its history. Using terrorist as state proxy to settle historical /religious score or to achieve ulterior objective has become an unwanted by-product of independence from colonial rule and subsequent partition. Populated with religious zealots, two nuclear armed nations and two nuclear armed neighbours (China and Russia); South Asia is a fertile field for state sponsored terrorism. A new trend prevalent in the region is the emergence of a complex mixture of charity with extremism with or without state approval, the result of a mutilated democratic process.

Pakistan is considered as one of the most vocal and active supporters of terrorist groups. Pakistani military strategists argued that a loyal government at the western border in Afghanistan would give Pakistan 'strategic depth' against its primary enemy India. Pakistan's elongated geography, the lack of space, depth and a hinterland denied its armed forces the ability to fight a prolonged war with India. In the 1990s another reason, to give Kashmiri militants a base from where they could be trained, funded and armed (Rashid, 2001: 186), was added for the Pakistani aspiration to have a friendly government in Afghanistan. Pakistan's military and ISI provided arms, ammunition, financial aid, supplies for combat, and training to the Taliban before their inroad to capture the government in Afghanistan. The support continued even after the September 11 attacks when US declares war on terrorism. Pakistan also helped recruit fighters for the Taliban, often working with domestic religious associations. Support for the Taliban went far beyond official government circles and included major political parties, religious networks, and many ordinary Pakistanis. A large chunk of Taliban's forces is manned by Pakistanis (Griffin, 2001: 33-4; Goodson, 2001: 111-118). The Pakistani establishment is directly involved in supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan and thereby creating space for al-Qaeda (Paterson, 2009, September 23, Wikileaks). The US diplomats in Pakistan have expressed fear that no amount of money from the US to Pakistan will sever that link. The consistent involvement of Pakistani state in promoting terror activities to achieve strategic objective has been the root cause of terrorism.

Pakistan's inferior military compare to its bitter rival India and its historical hatred for the latter resulted in official promotion of terrorism against India by Pakistan. Pakistan could not tolerate a strong, prosper and powerful India in its eastern border. Pakistan's army, ISI and Islamic extremists, who shared a common brotherhood in their faith, intent, motives and measures 'wanted to destabilize India's secular polity, create communal discord and undermine India's economic and social progress (Singh, 2008: 28). Islamabad has eagerly established and backed a plethora of terrorist organizations like LeT, JeM and Harkat-ul-Mujahedin with money, weapons, and training to train jihadists to fight in Kashmir. LeT headquarter in Muridke was set up on 77 hectares of land donated by the Pakistani government. Its construction was funded by many of the same Saudi moneymen who financed al Qaeda. Pakistani military regard LeT as an important reserve force that could be unleashed in the event of a conflict with India (Khan, 2010: 34-39). In the absence of a strong political leadership, government machineries in Pakistan are either inefficient or corrupt. This led to the internal chaos, which paves the way for the army to take over the reign. Over the period of time the army became the only stabilizing force in Pakistan. With the growing unrest, poverty and rampant corruption it has been very difficult on the part of an existing government, military or otherwise, to rule the country without the aid of a coercive force like the semi-rogue ISI and its clients (terrorist group). Dealing with the ISI is fraught with uncertainties. It was as if there were six or seven different personalities within the ISI. Some in the ISI are under controlled but one section – known as Directorate S – financed and nurtured terrorists (Woodward, 2010: 4). This vital supports from the state organs to terrorism is the root cause of terrorism.

Former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf was candid in his admission that, "Militant groups were formed and the government turned a blind eye because they wanted India to discuss Kashmir" (Bagchi, 2010, *Times of India*). President Asif Ali Zardari plainly admitted that terrorist groups were deliberately "created and nurtured" as a policy to achieve some short-term tactical objectives. Zardari was more vocal when he said, "Let us be truthful to ourselves and make a candid admission of the realities. The terrorists of today were the heroes of yesteryears until 9/11 occurred and they began to haunt us as well" (Nelson, 2009, *The Telegraph*). The state support of America to Pakistan during the Afghan jihad encouraged the institutionalization of terrorism in Pakistan. In 1986, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) chief William Casey had persuaded the US Congress to provide the Mujahideen with American-made Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to shoot down Soviet planes and provide US advisers to train the guerrillas. The CIA, Britain's MI6 and the ISI also agreed on a provocative plan to launch guerrilla attacks into the Soviet. The ISI and Pakistan's Jamaat-e-Islami set up reception committees to welcome, house and train the arriving militants and then encouraged them to join the Mujaheedin groups, usually the Hizb-e-Islami (Rashid, 2001: 130). None of the state intelligence agencies involved wanted to consider the consequences of bringing together thousands of Islamic radicals from all over the world. American citizens only woke up to the consequences when Afghanistan-trained Islamic militants blew up the World Trade Centre in New York in 1993, killing six people and injuring 1,000.

The September 11 attacks and the u-turn of Pakistan on its Afghanistan policy enraged the military, militants and ISI. The full consequences of American state support to terrorism would unfold later when Pakistan was forced to support the US war on terrorism. Dissention amongst the various organs of Pakistan state agencies was apparent. Pakistani military authorities, before surrendering to America's arm-twisting, were vehemently defending their support for the Taliban regime which, according to them, provided Pakistan 'strategic depth.' ISI openly rebelled against Pakistan's support to the Americans. The u-turn of Pakistan against the Taliban turned the ISI against the US and its military government. The intra-governmental conflicts encouraged terrorism. The spread of terrorism, which was earlier limited to the South Asian theater, split into the west more particularly to the US. Collectively, the ISI and the militants of all hues turned against the US. Evidential supports established to the fact that state's connivance of Pakistan with terror groups is the root cause of terrorism. Terrorism in other South Asian countries is mostly without state support. In the absence of state support, a vital requirement to sustain terrorism, the militant groups or individuals are mostly cornered or their effects are localized. Indigenous terrorist groups are considered as fringe force in India. Their effect and spread is very limited. When they receive support from beyond the border, their capacity rises proportionally. Sri Lanka never supported terrorism rather the state policy in Sri Lanka is widely accused as the reason of terrorism. The LTTE was mostly supported by Tamil expatriates and crime syndicate. Despite being a phenomenal force for long, the lack of state support grounded the LTTE. International Islamic terrorists use Bangladesh as a safe haven and often cross the porous border into India for bombing and other

attacks. Indian domestic extremist groups, including the United Liberation Front of Assam, use Bangladesh as a safe haven (Moriarty, 2009, January 14, Wikileaks). Although the ISI use Islamic card to channel terrorist to India through Bangladesh, state support is non-existent.

Presently Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan and Syria are listed by the US as the state sponsors of terrorism. However, because of diplomatic compulsions and regional interest the US list does not include Pakistan, which has long aided a range of terrorist groups fighting against India in Kashmir and is a major sponsor of Taliban forces fighting the US-backed government in Afghanistan (Byman, 2008: IX). This has been encouraging Pakistan to support terrorist groups which forms as the root cause of terrorism.

Management of Terrorist Organization

South Asia has been the base for many terrorist organizations. The management of terrorist organizations no more remained a secretive or criminal job. Rather the position is becoming respectable in the society. Terrorist leaders are seen as a socio-political-strategic equalizer in the country. Managing a huge army of militants, like the LeT, JeM and al Qaeda required constant flow of money, manpower, material support and protection from the state. The functioning style of these organizations has attained a surprising level of sophistication. Some of the terror organizations are also turning like a consultancy firm offering services on payment. Many terror organizations in South Asia are 'guns for hire' like the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Patterson, 2009, October 16, Wikileaks). Militant groups in other countries of South Asia, although try to emulate the functioning style of terror groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan, their efforts has so far been stymied by state agencies.

In Pakistan militant leaders enjoy impunity from the law. They command power and influence as per the size, stature and striking capability of their respective militant organizations. The heads of most of the terrorist organizations are entitled to huge benefits in terms of funding, fame and authority inside Pakistan. This is a dangerous arrangement and contributing to the root cause of terrorism. During the Afghan war, Pakistani mosques and madrassas were acted as the launching pad for Afghan jihad and considered as factories producing end numbers of jihadi fighters. The culture of building a mosque or a madrassa, which is like starting a business outlet, is very popular in the country. The incentives for the owner (group or individuals) of the mosque or madrassa are attractive, which include livelihood, fame, influence and most importantly position in the society. In the absence of any government restriction or regulation of foreign funding, mosques and madrassas in Pakistan has long been pampered by the Arab funding. In most cases, the jihadi forces breeds from these mosques and madrassas. Nearly all provinces of Pakistan receiving finance from Saudi governments to run mosque and madrassas. The Sindh province, which was earlier untouched with the infiltration of Saudi money to fund mujahideen, is now flooded with an increasing

level of Saudi money. President Zardari was candid when he said, "presently mosques and madrassas in Pakistan has become a cottage industry" (Patterson, 2008, January 28, Wikileaks). When Pakistan has begun to debate whether the government should allow religious groups to run their own complexes with large funding from abroad, former Interior Minister of Pakistan Lt. Gen. (Retd) Moin-udding Haider says "the government cannot take any action since no law has been broken" (Mir, 2002: 56-72). Terrorist groups like the LeT get most of their recruits from the 8,000 madrasas most are a by-product of a crumbling state. More than a million youths are now enrolled in madrasas because of Pakistan's deteriorating education system and the growing appeal of Islam (Wright, 2000, *The Los Angeles Times*).

South Asia with the highest incidence of poverty (43% of the population) view madrassas, which provide food, shelter and education, with respect. Children of Poor parents gravitate towards the well managed madrassas and terrorist organizations functioning under the garb of religion. In a secret cable the American Ambassador in Islamabad written to her home government that "We are seeing young Punjabi men turn up in FATA and Afghanistan as fighters recruited from areas of southern Punjab where poverty, illiteracy and despair create a breeding ground for extremism" (Patterson, 2009, February 4, Wikileaks). The management of terrorist organizations, madrassas and mosques, which are imparting extremism, is the root cause of terrorism. The sense of supremacy of the leader of terrorist organizations and their personal aura, gained through the act of terror, encourages them to sustain terrorism at any cost. Leaders of militant organizations were well aware of the fact that the more they increase their support base the more they are immune from state law. So there has always been the pressure for the militant leaders to recruit as many militants as possible. In the absence of democracy, rule of law and strong measure to curb extra-constitutional authority in South Asian and Middle Eastern countries, the web of terrorism is now contagious. Ambitious individuals (commanders), inebriated with the passion of medievalic Islamic glory, organizing and managing terror institutions to replicate medievalic Islamic rule. Weak government, weaker political leadership and struggle for power only aiding to their ambition.

Islam provides the requisite platform to the militant leaders to propagate their ideals. They speak in front of huge gatherings at various mosques across the country every Friday where people of all hues gather. They travel far and wide across the country to address huge crowds and seek recruits to save Islam. The promises they make to their recruits are money, food, fame and service to Islam while one is alive; and in death proximity with hundred virgins, martyrdom and heaven for the person and 10 of his/her close relatives. In theory and speeches, leaders of terrorist organization espoused the cause of liberating occupied Muslim countries from foreign bondage but practically no importance attaches to the aspiration to liberate specific occupied territories or oppressed peoples (Hudson, 1999, 24-25). In connection with various judicial investigations it has emerged that sums of money collected as voluntary contributions from the 'faithful' serves not to finance the 'terrorist act' as such, but to guarantee a future for family members of a suicide attacker, or someone who died in the course of a terrorist

action (Spataro, 2008: 507-524). This is how terror organization makes joining a terror organization attractive for desperate families. The management of terror organization includes sending Imams to encourage parents to send their children to a given mosque from where they could be sent to training camps. Another method is to arrange religious congregation where the speaker may address various aspects of Indian perfidy and abuse in Kashmir. Smaller meetings are subsequently arranged on related topics. This allows the organization to continue whittling down the potential pool of recruits (Fair, 2004: 489-504). This is how the management of terrorist organization is a vital reason of the root cause of terrorism.

Conclusion

Not one reason contributes to the root cause of terrorism. A combination of factors play equally important role in sustaining terrorism and its root. The establishment of terror units may certainly be done on the basis of achieving an Islamic goal of regaining the lost Muslim land or implementing Sharia in Muslim countries. However, hidden power struggles, fight for dominance and supremacy and the notion that bad behavior brings money keep the pot boiling for terrorism. The dynamic of terrorist organizations in South Asia force them to fight for prominence where sectarian groups and individuals scrambling for spaces in the society.

Any opposition to uproot terrorism meet with deadly outcome in the region. The recent killing of Salman Taseer, the Governor of Punjab in Pakistan is a grim reminder of the existing threat to those who oppose terrorism. The complex collaboration of militant groups, political parties and state agencies is a sign of future danger. Under such a threatening circumstance mainstream political parties or individuals shudder to take stand against militant organizations. The root of terrorist organizations in Pakistan is far deeper than one may imagine. The support of state to terror organizations make ordinary citizen believe that there is no criminality attached if one joins a militant organization. Instead they feel it gratifying to join one. This unstated policy has been encouraging more and more enterprising people to either open a terror outfit or join one to achieve fame, money, respect and power.

Finally, the root causes of terrorism could be addressed by severing the tie of state with terror organization and by sensitising society and sanitizing religion from the ills of terrorism. By discouraging and disbanding the management of terrorist organization South Asia could control terrorism in the region. Till the time leaders of terrorist organizations are allowed to work freely and rewarded, dealing with the elimination of the root causes of terrorism is not possible. A relevant factor, which hinders remedial action against terrorism, is the distinction made by states that some terrorist organizations are better than others and hence could be promoted. A comprehensive realization by the state that terrorism in any form is detrimental for the society is very much required to uproot terrorism.

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